

Walmart to Improve Health Care Through Research

The Walmart initiative helps underserved communities participate in clinical trial research.

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Walmart aims to expand community access to [health care](#) research as well as make such research more [equitable](#) via its recently launched Walmart Healthcare Research Institute (WHRI).

[Clinical trials](#) often do not represent the population as a whole. In fact, in 2020, 75% of trial participants were white, 11% were Latino, 8% were Black and 6% were Asian, according to [data from the Food and Drug Administration](#). This is despite the fact that Latinos make up 19% of the total U.S. population and Blacks make up nearly 14% of the population, for example, according to U.S. Census data.

To combat these statistics, WHRI will focus on health interventions that will positively impact underrepresented communities, such as older adults, women, minority populations and those living in rural areas, by including these populations in studies on new treatments and medications for chronic illnesses and other conditions.

“At Walmart, we want to help ensure all our customers have access to high quality, affordable and convenient health care resources, including innovative research,” said Walmart’s chief medical officer John Wigneswaran, MD, in a [Walmart news release](#). “We know our customers are interested in participating in health care research, but many have not had access until now. We are already making an impact for our customers and for medical research by raising patient trust and engagement in their care.”

Working with study partners such as clinical research organizations, academic medical centers and pharmaceutical companies, Walmart has already started to see results.

Bill Hawkins, chairman of the board at Duke University Health, said Walmart’s efforts are innovative and effective. “It is clear that the intention behind their foray into this space is to genuinely make a difference for patients of all ages, race and gender in their ability to access research,” he said.

